

recommendation has been repeated
by the Lord
Chancellors' Land Transfer Committee
in January,
1935-

About 60 or 70 years ago leading
members of
the legal profession began to consider
the possi-
bility of establishing a fresh system of
registration
of titles to land analogous to the
registration of
ships or stocks and shares of a
company. The
basis of this new system was the
registration of the
owner's name with a description of his
land and
a title number by which the land was
identified
on a special large scale map or plan. In
1862 the
first English Registration Act (Lord
Westbury's—
25 and 26 Vic. c. 53) was passed.¹ It was
non-
compulsory, and failed. Sixteen years
later a fresh
attempt was made by the Land Transfer
Act, 1875
(38 and 39 Vic. c. 87), but in the
course of ten
years' working only 113 titles were
registered.

In 1897 yet another, but more
successful attempt
to carry out the scheme of land
registration was
launched. The Land Transfer Act,
1897, altered
and amended the Act of 1875 and
incidentally
gave power compulsorily to enforce
registration in
any county or part of a county to be
subsequently
specified by Order or Orders of the
Privy Council.
Such compulsory powers were soon
after acquired
in respect of the City and County of

London. The system met with growing success and, with various improvements, continued until 1925, when in common with the conveyancing law relating to unregistered land (Law of Property Act, 1925), it was found desirable to bring out a new Act

¹ This Act is entitled "An Act to facilitate the Proof of Titles and the Conveyance of Real Estate," and as Lord Westbury secured its passing, it became known as Lord Westbury's Act.